CORLEY et al.
Serial No.: **09/647,711**
Amendment dated March 11, 2005
Response to Office Action dated October 14, 2004

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-13 are pending. By the present amendment, claim 7 has been amended to correct a minor typographical informality noted in the Office Action. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Entry of this amendment is proper because the amendment merely corrects a minor typographical informality noted in the Office Action. Therefore, the amendment does not present any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration. Accordingly, entry is proper, which action is respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 1, 2, 5-8 and 11-13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McComb et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,224, hereinafter "McComb") in view of Diamond (U.S. Patent No. 6,269,368) is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action now acknowledges that there is no teaching or suggestion in McComb of the specifically claimed feature of *searching the query store for a previously constructed query that resembles said constructed query.* The Office Action now cites Diamond as allegedly overcoming this deficiency of McComb. It is respectfully submitted that Diamond fails to overcome the

CORLEY et al.
Serial No.: **09/647,711**
Amendment dated March 11, 2005
Response to Office Action dated October 14, 2004

fundamental deficiencies of McComb, and thus the combination fails to render the

claims obvious.

In particular, Diamond is directed to an information retrieval system that

uses dynamic evidence combination to purportedly improve information retrieval

effectiveness. According to Diamond, the user enters a query, and the system

generates "alternative representations of the query,"; it does not search a query

store for queries that resemble the query entered by the user. It is respectfully

submitted that the generation of these "alternative representations of the query" is

in no way the same as the claimed feature of searching a query store to determine

whether a query entered by a user resembles a previously constructed query. In

complete contrast, Diamond generates an alternative representation of a query that

is wholly different from the query originally constructed by the user. This is

entirely inapposite to the claimed feature of searching a query store for queries

that resemble the query entered by the user.

Additionally, this alternative representation of the query is not used to

locate previously constructed queries residing in a query store to determine

whether any previously constructed queries resemble the constructed query input

by the user. The system of Diamond instead performs a matching function

between the alternative representations of the query (not a previously constructed

query from the query store that represents the constructed query) and alternative

CORLEY et al.
Serial No.: **09/647,711**
Amendment dated March 11, 2005
Response to Office Action dated October 14, 2004

representations of a document to generate a matching score. This operation of the Diamond system is described at Col. 6, lines 4-36. In short, Diamond matches documents to a user's query using various representations of the documents and various *alternative* representations of the user query. There is no attempt whatsoever in Diamond to match the user query to a previously constructed query stored in a query store. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the combination of Diamond with McComb fails to render the claimed invention obvious.

It is also respectfully submitted that there is no motivation to combine the references to McComb and Diamond because they are directed to entirely different methods. In particular, McComb suggests that a new query can be constructed by chaining parts of previous queries together. It is the user's responsibility to locate and identify the previous query or parts thereof that may be potentially reused. In contrast, Diamond teaches automated generation of the alternative representations of the query input by the user. In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that there is no motivation to combine the teachings of McComb and Diamond.

Moreover, even if, *arguendo*, the combination were proper, the combination nevertheless fails to render the claimed invention obvious because there is no teaching or suggestion in either reference of the specifically recited

CORLEY et al.
Serial No.: **09/647,711**
Amendment dated March 11, 2005
Response to Office Action dated October 14, 2004

feature of *searching the query store for a previously constructed query that resembles said constructed query.* Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The rejection of claims 3, 4, 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over McComb in view of Diamond and further in view of Malloy (U.S. Patent No. 5,787,234) is respectfully traversed.

It is respectfully submitted that Malloy fails to overcome the fundamental deficiencies noted above with respect to McComb and Diamond. Therefore, even if, *arguendo*, the combination of McComb, Diamond and Malloy were proper, the combination nevertheless fails to render the claimed invention obvious. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the entire application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

CORLEY et al.
Serial No.: **09/647,711**
Amendment dated March 11, 2005
Response to Office Action dated October 14, 2004

Should the Examiner deem that further issues require resolution prior to

allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney of record at

the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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